



# The Bonner County Safety Record

## Smoke Hazard Risk & Risk Controls

Bonner County is experiencing poor air quality caused by multiple forest fires. Please review the information below for Risks and Risk Control Measures you can take to minimize the hazard:

### Risks

Breathing smoke is not good for anyone, even healthy people. Wildfire smoke is especially harmful to:

- Infants and young children (especially children age 7 or younger). Young children breathe in more air per pound of body weight and are more susceptible to smoke.
- Older adults, over 65 years of age. An elderly person's lungs are generally not as efficient as when he or she was younger.
- Pregnant women. Wildfire smoke may contain pollutants that may be harmful to developing babies. It is best for pregnant women to avoid being outdoors for long periods of time when wildfire smoke is in the air.
- People with pre-existing lung and cardiovascular conditions. This includes people with respiratory infections, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure and those who previously had a heart attack or stroke.
- Smokers. Smoking tobacco damages the lungs. Exposure to wildfire smoke can increase damage to the lungs.

Common symptoms from smoke inhalation include:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain or tightness
- Headaches
- Coughing
- Irritated sinuses
- Stinging eyes
- Sore throat
- Fatigue

Air Quality Index (AQI) Values	Levels of Health Concern	Colors
<i>When the AQI is in this range:</i>	<i>air quality conditions are:</i>	<i>as symbolized by this color:</i>
0 - 50	Good	Green
51 - 100	Moderate	Yellow
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Red
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
301 - 500	Hazardous	Maroon

### Ways to Reduce Smoke Exposure

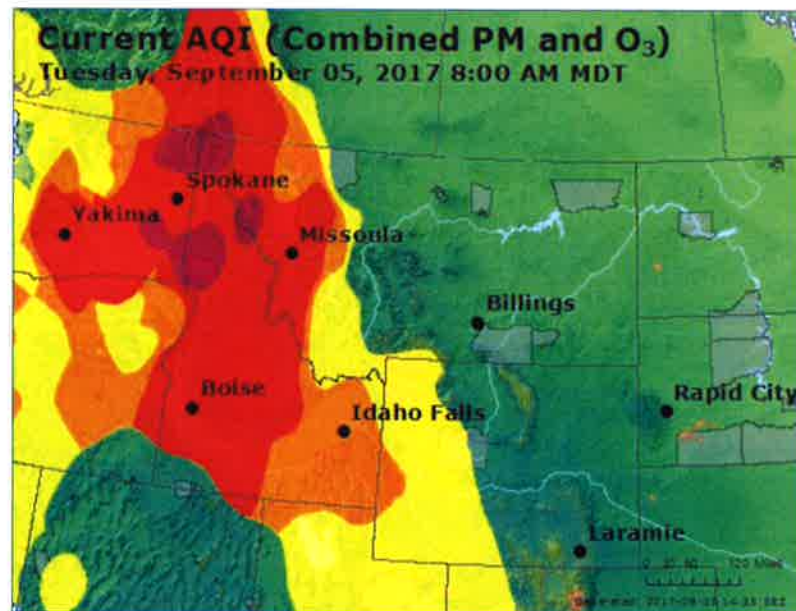
- Do not add to indoor pollution. When smoke levels are high, do not use anything that burns, such as candles, fireplaces, or gas stoves. Avoid frying or broiling when cooking. Do not vacuum, because vacuuming stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke, because smoking puts even more pollution into the air.
- If you wear contact lenses, switch to eyeglasses in a smoky environment.
- Pay attention to local air quality reports. Listen and watch for news or health warnings about smoke. Find out if your community provides reports about the Environmental Protection Agency's Air Quality Index (AQI). Also pay attention to public health messages about taking additional safety measures.
- Refer to visibility guides if they are available. Not every community monitors the amount of particles that are in the air. In the western part of the United States, some communities have guidelines to help people estimate the Air Quality Index (AQI) based on how far they can see.

[https://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.local\\_city&cityid=677](https://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.local_city&cityid=677) and <http://airquality.deq.idaho.gov/>





- If you are advised to stay indoors, keep indoor air as clean as possible. Keep windows and doors closed unless it is very hot inside. Run a filtered air conditioner if you have one, but keep the fresh air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside. If you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, seek shelter elsewhere. For example, go to a local mall, movie theater, library or some area that can provide temporary relief from the smoke.
- Stay well-hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Staying hydrated helps dilute phlegm in the respiratory tract making it easier to cough smoke particles out. Plan on coughing, it is nature's way of clearing your lungs. Avoid caffeine products, sugary drinks and alcohol as they have a dehydrating effect.
- Avoid outdoor exercise or other strenuous activities on poor air quality days. Both adults and children should limit outdoor activities when smoke levels are a concern.
- Follow your doctor's advice about medicines and about your respiratory management plan if you have asthma or another lung disease. Keep at least a 5-day supply of medications on hand. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.
- Do not rely on dust masks for protection. Paper "comfort" or "dust" masks commonly found at hardware stores are designed to trap large particles, such as sawdust. These masks will not protect your lungs from smoke. An "N95" mask, properly worn, will offer some protection.



Legend: National Parks/Monuments (orange square), Tribal Boundaries (grey square).  
The tribal boundaries shown here are provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and are intended to be used as a general spatial reference only. They are not a formal determination of tribal boundaries by the EPA.



#### Additional info for Bonner County employees:

- Bonner County Emergency Management has N95 dust masks available for County employee use. These are for comfort only, and not for hazardous atmospheres that need qualified respiratory protection. Contact Risk Management for guidance if you need a higher level of protection due to your work requirements.
- If you have concerns about your safety or other work conditions, please contact your supervisor.